CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A camera comprising a strobe for supplying light to a scene, the strobe flashing repeatedly during composition of a photograph.

2. The camera of claim 1 further comprising a preview mode wherein the strobe flashes repeatedly.

3. The camera of claim 2 further comprising a user control by which the user selects the preview mode.

4. The camera of claim 3 wherein:

a) in response to a first setting of the user control, the strobe flashes repeatedly during the composition of a photograph; and

b) in response to a second setting of the user control, the strobe does not flash during the composition of a photograph.

5. The camera of claim 1 further comprising:

a) a light sensor, and

b) comparison means for comparing a light level measured with the light sensor to a threshold value, and wherein

the camera enables strobe flashes during composition of a photograph when the light level is below the threshold value, and disables the strobe flashes during composition of a photograph when the light level is above the threshold value.

6. The camera of claim 1 further comprising strobe electronics for driving the strobe, the strobe electronics having an energy storage capacity, each strobe flash during composition of a photograph dissipating less than all of the energy stored in the strobe electronics.

7. The camera of claim 6 wherein the amount of strobe energy dissipated for one strobe flash is different from the amount of strobe energy dissipated for another strobe flash.

8. The camera of claim 1 further comprising:

a) an electronic array light sensor; and

b) a logic unit that controls the electronic array light sensor and receives image data from the electronic array light sensor; and

c) a display that displays an image under control of the logic unit;

wherein the camera takes and displays preview photographs repeatedly on the display during composition of a final photograph by the user, and wherein the camera flashes the strobe once for each preview image.

9. The camera of claim 8 wherein the camera flashes the strobe more often than once for each preview image.

10. The camera of claim 9 wherein at least one of the preview images may use a different number strobe flashes than another preview image.

11. A method of controlling a camera comprising flashing a strobe repeatedly during composition of a photograph.

12. The method of claim 11 further comprising the steps of:

a) detecting a user control; and

b) entering a preview mode in response to the detecting step.

13. The method of claim 12 further comprising the steps of:

a) exiting the preview mode; and

b) suspending the repeated flashes of the strobe.

14. The method of claim 12 further comprising:

a) in response to a first setting of the user control, entering the preview mode and flashing the strobe repeatedly during composition of a photograph; and

b) in response to a second setting of the user control, entering the preview mode without flashing the strobe.

15. The method of claim 11 further comprising using a preview photograph taken during composition of a final photograph in determining the proper strobe energy to use in taking the final photograph.

16. The method of claim 11 further comprising dissipating less than all of an energy storage capacity of strobe electronics with each flash of the strobe during composition of a photograph.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein the amount of strobe energy dissipated for one strobe flash is different from the amount of strobe energy dissipated for another strobe flash.

18. The method of claim 11 further comprising the steps of.

a) measuring the scene lighting level using a light sensor; and

b) comparing the scene lighting level with a threshold value; and

c) enabling the strobe flashes during composition of a photograph when the scene lighting level is below the threshold value and disabling the strobe flashes during composition when the scene lighting level is above the threshold value.

19. A camera comprising:

a) strobe means for supplying light to a scene; and

b) electronics means for driving the strobe; and

c) logic means for controlling the strobe and electronics means, wherein the logic means flashes the strobe repeatedly during composition of a photograph by a user of the camera.